



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Allegheny National Forest  
Supervisor's Office

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File Code: 1570

Date: August 5, 2012

Ms. Cathy Pedler, et al  
Allegheny Defense Project  
117 West Wood Lane  
Kane, PA 16735-4509

RE: Appeal of the Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Morrison Run Project Environmental Assessment Project, Bradford Ranger District, Allegheny National Forest, Appeal # 12-09-19-0032 A215

Dear Ms. Pedler:

On June 21, 2012, a Notice of Appeal was filed pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 215.11, for the above-referenced project for; yourself as an individual and representing the Allegheny Defense Project, Bill Belitskus representing the Allegheny Defense Project, and Ernie Reed as an individual and representing the Heartwood organization.

District Ranger Macario J. Herrera signed the Decision Notice on May 2, 2012, and the legal notice was published in *The Bradford Era* (Bradford, Pennsylvania) May 7, 2012. I have reviewed the Project Record and considered the enclosed recommendation of the Appeal Reviewing Office (ARO), District Ranger Timothy Pohlman, Shawnee National Forest, regarding the disposition of your appeal. The ARO's review focused on the decision documentation developed by the Responsible Official, District Ranger Macario J. Herrera, and the issues in your appeal. This letter constitutes my decision on your appeal and on the specific relief you requested.

### **FOREST ACTION BEING APPEALED**

The Morrison Run Project involves actions that address multiple-use resource management goals and objectives including treatments to improve forest structural conditions, manage late structural stands and conditions, provide quality hardwood products, address insect and disease issues, regenerate or improve oak stands, maintain and enhance transportation systems, reduce sedimentation and maintain, restore or improve soil quality, productivity, and function, provide diverse and specialized habitats across the landscape, restore and enhance stream processes and aquatic habitat diversity, implement non-native invasive plant treatments and maintain or enhance the quality of scenic resources

### **APPEAL REVIEWING OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION**

The ARO found no evidence the Responsible Official's decision on the Morrison Run Project violated law, regulation, or policy. He found the decision responded to your comments raised during the analysis process and public comment period and also adequately assessed the



environmental effects of the selected action. In addition, he found the issues in your appeal were addressed, where appropriate, in the decision documentation.

Based on this review, the ARO recommended District Ranger Macario J. Herrera's Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact be affirmed.

## **DECISION**

After careful review of the Project Record and your appeal, I concur with the ARO's analysis and findings regarding your appeal issues. To avoid repetition, I adopt his rationale as my own, and refer you to the enclosed August 1, 2012, recommendation for further details. It is my decision to affirm District Ranger Macario J. Herrera's Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Morrison Run Project on the Allegheny National Forest.

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 215.18(c), this decision constitutes the final administrative determination of the United States Department of Agriculture. This decision may be implemented on, but not before, the 15<sup>th</sup> business day following the date of this letter (36 C.F.R. § 215.9(b)).

Sincerely,

*/s/ Erin Connelly*

ERIN CONNELLY

Appeal Deciding Officer

Forest Supervisor

Enclosure

cc: Macario Herrera

Steve Dowlan

Ava Turnquist

Patricia R Rowell